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Standing Committee on, 1959*

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second Session—Twenty-fourth Parliament

1959

Government
Publications

STANDING COMMITTEE

ON

PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

Chairman: Mr. Heath MACQUARRIE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE

No. 2

[including first Report to the House]

MONDAY, JUNE 1st 1959

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

WITNESS:

Mr. Nelson J. Castonguay, Chief Electoral Officer.

THE QUEEN'S PRINTER AND CONTROLLER OF STATIONERY
OTTAWA, 1959

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

Chairman: Heath Macquarrie, Esq.

Vice-Chairman M. Deschambault, Esq.,

and Messrs.

Aiken,	Godin ⁽¹⁾ ,	Meunier,
Barrington,	Grills,	Nielsen,
Beech,	Hardie,	Ormiston,
Bell (<i>Carleton</i>),	Henderson,	Paul,
Bell (<i>Saint John-Albert</i>),	Howard,	Pickersgill,
Carter,	Johnson,	Richard (<i>Ottawa East</i>)
Dinsdale,	Kucherepa,	Tassé,
Flynn,	McBain,	Valade,
Fraser,	McIlraith,	Webster.

Antonio Plouffe,
Clerk of the Committee.

(1) Replaced Mr. Benidickson on May 22, 1959.

ORDER OF REFERENCE

FRIDAY, May 22, 1959.

Ordered,—That the name of Mr. Godin be substituted for that of Mr. Benidickson on the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

ATTEST.

LÉON J. RAYMOND,
Clerk of the House.

REPORT TO THE HOUSE

WEDNESDAY, February 18, 1959.

The Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections has the honour to present its

FIRST REPORT

Your Committee recommends that it be empowered to print such papers and evidence as may be ordered by the Committee, and that Standing Order 66 be suspended in relation thereto.

Respectfully submitted,

H. MACQUARRIE,
Chairman.

NOTE: Concurred in the same day.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

MONDAY, June 1, 1959.

(4)

The Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections met this day at 9.30 a.m. Mr. Heath Macquarrie, Chairman, presided.

Members present: Messrs. Aiken, Bell (*Carleton*), Bell (*Saint John-Albert*), Carter, Henderson, Howard, Kucherepa, Macquarrie, McBain, Nielsen, Ormiston, Paul, Richard (*Ottawa East*) and Webster.—(14)

Also present: Mr. Frank McGee, M.P.

In attendance: Mr. Nelson J. Castonguay, Chief Electoral Officer, and Mr. E. A. Anglin, Q.C., Assistant Chief Electoral Officer, Ottawa.

The Chairman tabled a statistical summary of the communications received by the Chief Electoral Officer and the Secretary of State. The letters in question were filed on May 12, by Mr. Castonguay and identified as Appendix I.

(See also *Minutes of Proceedings of May 22, page 7*)

Mimeographed copies of this summary were distributed.

Mr. Nelson Castonguay was called, and questioned on the suggestions contained in Appendix I, particularly on

1. Absentee voting;
2. Permanent list of electors, revision and cost thereof;
3. Rejected ballots.

By consent, Mr. McGee queried the witness on spoiled ballots.

The witness tabled an answer to Mr. Bell (*Carleton*), regarding election offenses.

On motion of Mr. Bell (*Carleton*), seconded by Mr. Aiken,

Ordered,—That the above answer be printed as an appendix. (See *Appendix II to this day's evidence*)

Mr. Castonguay was asked to prepare memoranda relating to

1. An amendment to Section 14 of the Canada Elections Act;
2. Voting by Civil Servants abroad;
3. A possible extension of the present system of absentee voting.

At 10.55 o'clock, the Committee adjourned to the call of the Chair.

Antonio Plouffe,
Assistant Chief Clerk of Committees.

EVIDENCE

MONDAY, June 1, 1959.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, we now have a quorum. At the last meeting Mr. Castonguay was asked to prepare a summary of the various communications he and others had received with respect to suggested amendments to the Canada Elections Act. This has already been prepared and may be distributed now. I will ask Mr. Castonguay and Mr. Anglin to join us again.

Mr. Castonguay has also taken up a question asked by Mr. Bell of Carleton, and he has the answer here. We might lay that answer on the table for the committee, making certain that Mr. Bell has access to it.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Is this the one with respect to investigations in the last election?

Mr. N. J. CASTONGUAY (*Chief Electoral Officer*): Yes, Mr. Bell.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Are there any aspects of it upon which Mr. Castonguay would like to comment?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: No, Mr. Chairman. There is one suggestion made by counsel in Montreal to amend section 29 of the Canada Elections Act, and that is included among the letters that I tabled at the first meeting.

Mr. NIELSEN: Mr. Chairman, may we ask questions on this correspondence?

The CHAIRMAN: If Mr. Bell and Mr. Castonguay have finished that item, we can proceed to this summary, and I am sure Mr. Castonguay will answer any questions you may have.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): This is a very brief statement, actually, Mr. Castonguay is giving about election offences which occur, and it seems to me it might be generally useful if it were printed as an appendix. It is only three pages.

The CHAIRMAN: You so move, Mr. Bell?

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Yes, I do.

Mr. AIKEN: I will second the motion.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bell moves; Mr. Aiken seconds: that the information which is made available be printed as an appendix to our record.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. NIELSEN: I would like to ask Mr. Castonguay, with regard to the third letter as listed in his summary as being received from Dr. Boyer, whether any changes have been contemplated in your suggested amendments so as to allow survey parties in the field to cast their ballots in future elections?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Mr. Chairman, the Canada Elections Act limits any suggestion I may make only to amendments that would be for the more convenient administration of the act. This would involve a change in principle, which I am not permitted to tackle in any way.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions?

Mr. HOWARD: Was it our thought that we would take these one by one, or seriatim, maybe, in the general discussion?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think there was any clarification on that. There is certainly an area of interest for any member to ask questions on.

Mr. HOWARD: I wonder whether that might not be the easiest thing, to go through them, instead of jumping all over the place.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: If that is agreeable, we shall direct our attention to a letter from Mr. Charlebois, who is suggesting an amendment dealing with an improvement in polling facilities.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): What type of improvement?

The CHAIRMAN: You might indicate, Mr. Castonguay, just what suggestion Mr. Charlebois did have.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Mr. Chairman, it is more along the lines of more suitable premises for polling stations. With election officers, suitable premises are what really are available. Before 1940 returning officers did not seem to have too much difficulty in finding premises in private dwellings for polling stations. But since the end of the last war this has been an increasing problem, so much so that in many cases we have not been able to find suitable premises and we have had to centralize polling stations into schools, community centres—public buildings.

It has been the experience of some returning officers that when finding suitable premises, even private garages are now put at their disposal; so it is a matter of availability and what is at their disposal.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): In your instructions to your returning officers, you do tell them to get the best places that they possibly can?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: That is in the instructions.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): So, surely, this is a local problem?

Mr. AIKEN: I was going to ask: this is really a problem for the returning officer, to find the best premises he can?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Yes.

Mr. AIKEN: Along that line, I would like to ask about returning officers, Mr. Castonguay. I notice you have had new returning officers back for instructions previous to the elections. How long has this procedure been carried out? Has it always been the case?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Oh, yes. That procedure was initiated by the first chief electoral officer and continued by my immediate predecessor. It is almost impossible to hold an election within sixty days without this work being done.

Mr. AIKEN: Are any of the old, previously appointed returning officers called in for instruction as well?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: It has been my policy to bring in returning officers and give them a three-day course of instruction. If time permits, I travel throughout the country and draw them into a central place in each province and give them a course of instruction: old and new, if time permits.

Mr. AIKEN: So that all returning officers at various intervals receive verbal instructions about all these matters?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: At the last election only twenty did not receive my instructions, because time did not permit it. We had a course lined up for the week the election was held.

Mr. AIKEN: Can you tell me approximately how many new returning officers there were, just prior to the last election?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I think, roughly, around sixty.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions with regard to letter No. 1?

Mr. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman, I would like to express one thought arising out of what appears to be the most general complaint—especially in smaller communities, which are invariably rural polls—where there is a community hall or a publicly owned building. The point has been made that in such cases the community hall should be used.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: The argument is the rent, and so on, would assist the community in financing and operating its own hall rather than using the D.R.O.'s home, which will be in many cases.

Mr. HOWARD: I can appreciate this is a problem for the returning officer, particularly; but I wonder if in the instructions that are issued concerning the finding of suitable places, whether that specific matter is dealt with or covered?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: No, it is not. The instructions give the returning officer full latitude to select whatever suitable premises there are in a polling division for a polling station. After all, the act gives him exclusive jurisdiction in this matter, and the instructions are all along those lines.

Mr. HOWARD: There is nothing in the instructions about specific types of facilities—schools, and things of that nature?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: No, none whatsoever.

Mr. HOWARD: Do you think that is something that should be drawn to the attention of, or a request made to the R.O.?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: To the returning officer locally.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions on this one?

The second letter on our list is one from Mr. Whitehouse, and deals with voting by civil servants employed overseas.

Mr. AKEN: Mr. Chairman, looking through this summary of suggestions, I find the vast majority relate to this particular subject—that is, absentee voters. There are several in connection with civil servants and several others in connection with service men. Perhaps those could all be covered at one time, rather than going through them individually.

I am referring to items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7—practically all of them. We hardly need to go through them individually. No. 19 is registration of voters, and so is No. 20. No. 24 refers to the lowering of the voting age. A good many of them refer to this particular subject.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Could we start by having Mr. Castonguay outline to us what the experience has been in Canada with regard to absentee voting? As I recollect, it was in the act at one stage—I believe, in 1935.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Mr. Chairman, in 1934 the Franchise Act came into being, and it may be of interest to the committee if I were to read my predecessor's report on the use of absentee voting at that election. It was used, for the first time, in the 1935 election.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): And the only time?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Yes, for the only time. It was limited to fishermen, lumbermen, miners and sailors only; and was only applicable within the provinces. If a miner from Ontario was employed in British Columbia he would not get privileges of absentee voting, because he had to be absent within his own province.

My predecessor, in his report to the House of Commons, made the following comments on absentee voting:

I was also called upon, on many occasions, to express an opinion with regard to absentee voting. This is the first time that there has been absentee voting at a dominion election. The procedure appeared to be

most complicated to election officers and political workers. The right to vote as an absentee voter is limited to four classes of persons, namely: fishermen, lumbermen, miners and sailors actually engaged or employed in any of these occupations on polling day at a distance of not less than 25 miles from their ordinary polling stations and in the same province. This limitation gave rise to a lot of dissatisfaction and misunderstanding in most electoral districts and the application of the absentee voting provisions complicated to a great extent the duties of the election officers, which were already intricate enough. Absentee voting was not resorted to to a great extent. There were only 5,334 absentee voters' ballots cast in the whole of Canada on polling day. Of this number 1,533 ballots were rejected, leaving only 3,801 valid ballots.

Furthermore, the absentee voting procedure was the cause of a considerable increase in the cost of the holding of the general election. In the first place, a large number of blank forms, ballots, etcetera, had to be printed to supply each polling station with a certain number. This printing cost upwards of \$16,000.

In the second place, a list of the names, addresses and occupations of the candidates nominated in each province had to be furnished to each polling station. Except in the province of Saskatchewan, where there is an interval of two weeks between nomination and polling days in every electoral district, this list could not be printed until after the close of nomination on the seventh day before polling day. For obvious reasons, the list was printed in four different cases in the western provinces and it was printed in Ottawa only for the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

The delivery of these lists of candidates necessitated the use of aeroplanes in several electoral districts and it has also made it necessary to deliver the ballot boxes by messengers in most rural polling divisions at great cost. Otherwise, most of these boxes would have been sent by mail at parcel post rates. The cost of the application of the absentee voting provisions is not yet available, but it is estimated that it will be close to a quarter of a million dollars. In my opinion, therefore, the result of the last general election shows that absentee voting is a costly, ineffective and complicated procedure which should not be resorted to at any future dominion election.

The CHAIRMAN: Your question, Mr. Carter?

Mr. CARTER: On the statement that has just been made, is there any special reason for an abnormal number of spoiled ballots?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Yes. I think it has been shown that at that time most electors, especially in large urban centres, did not know the name of their electoral district. They may be living on the dividing line between one constituency and another. There were no facilities, such as maps, and postal guides, in each polling station in Canada for the elector to establish conclusively in what electoral district he was entitled to vote. So, most rejected ballots were attributed to the elector who had cast a vote in the wrong electoral district.

Under the service voting procedure, which is a form of absentee voting used, in each voting place we supply an index book and map of all cities in Canada having more than two electoral districts. In addition to that they have a book of excerpts of the postal guide. While this is not perfectly normal at too many ballots, that information is supplied on that basis. It gives the service elector an opportunity to identify clearly which electoral district he votes for. But to provide that facility for each polling station in Canada would be a very costly experience.

Mr. HOWARD: I am wondering if Mr. Castonguay could outline under this absentee voting system exactly what is the method of registration of voters, and the manner in which the ballot that a person casting an absentee vote in his home electoral district is checked, to show that the person who voted was the person who should have voted, and so on?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: There is a basic method with the absentee vote. First, we have a permanent list that was adopted in 1934. There was a general enumeration in October, 1934 to compile a basic list.

In June, 1953 there was a revision, and that revision ended on June 30. From that day onwards there was no means of making any amendment in the electoral list. If a voter became ineligible there was no means to remove names from the list of people who had left the country and who had moved to a new electoral district, or of people who had died.

The election arrived in October, 1935, and I think it would be a fair comment to make that it did not give any satisfaction to any political party, because they all came back to Ottawa after the election, and I think the report of the committee in 1938 was unanimous, that the Franchise Act should be repealed, and that we should return to our present system. I would say that the method used then was the basic method used in all absentee voting. First there is the normal safeguard which we did not have in 1934. That is, a signed application to be on the list. With that signed application there is a check to verify the signature on the ballot which is included in an absentee vote. Some people maintain it is not an adequate check because not all returning officers are handwriting experts. It is, however, the system which has been used in all countries. There is the check against the signature contained in the postal envelope containing the absentee ballot.

If an elector presents himself at a polling station as a miner, fisherman or lumberman, he then is given a ballot. He writes in the name of the candidate on the ballot in the electoral district in which he believes he is qualified to vote. He marks that ballot in the poll, puts it in the envelope, signs his name on the back of the envelope and drops it in the ballot box. When the ballot box was returned to the electoral officer of the electoral district, he took out the envelopes and mailed them to the various returning officers. When the returning officers received them, the only check they had was to see whether or not the name was on the list. There was no check on this particular occasion, which is very important, of looking at the poll book to see whether or not anyone had voted in his name. That is another safeguard in absentee voting, that the poll book must be examined by returning officers to see whether that candidate has voted or whether someone had voted in his name. If so, that ballot is rejected.

Another system is comparison of the signature on the envelope against the signature on the ballot. There is another weakness of the 1935 system. Mind you, these are opinions I formed from the experience of my father and my predecessor. As you know, with the permanent list it is a closed list. People in urban areas are used to closed lists. At that time, however, there were roughly four million people voting under the rural procedure which, as you know, is very flexible. If a person's name is not on the list, all he has to do is get a qualified elector who is on the list and have him vouch for him.

In 1935 the rural population was faced with a closed list. That was not at all satisfactory to the rural population.

Mr. BELL (Carleton): They did not like it.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: The failure of the 1935 system, I would say, would be attributed to the fact that they adopted only 50 per cent of the working methods of a permanent list. All countries which have a permanent list have

a half-yearly revision of this list, which is done by postmen, provincial employees and municipal employees, such as secretaries of municipal councils and so on. This is brought up to date by this half-yearly revision. In addition to that, not only do they take these effective steps to keep the list up to date but also they provide absentee voting and do away with the criticism which may result from someone who has moved to another electoral district and finds himself unable to vote in the new electoral district. He can vote in the electoral district, but his vote is applied to the district in which he resided prior to his moving.

In 1935 this facility was provided for only four classes of people. Everybody was frozen into their residence the same as now, only there was a period of about eight months between the election; and now we have a period of roughly sixty days. If it is the committee's thought to give consideration to permanent lists, such permanent lists will fail completely if absentee voting is not provided to electors who necessarily have to be absent from home. If you have permanent lists without absentee voting, the same situation as in 1935 will be repeated.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): What about the reverse? Will absentee voting fail without permanent lists?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: In the province of Saskatchewan, absentee voting is based generally on an affidavit taken at the poll. It is somewhat similar to the 1935 system, inasmuch as there is no permanent list. They have, however, the safeguard of comparing the signature against the one on the postal envelope. I would imagine there would be a lot of persons who had hopes of being elected who would find 2,000 postal ballots on the returning officer's desk. The candidate may have a majority of about 1,000. There would be a lot of "people from Missouri" who would want to know where these had come from. If you have a signature to compare against an application card, then there is one safeguard. However, they are not 100 per cent perfect.

There are systems which have been adopted in places such as in Australia where they have a compulsory vote. It might be interesting to the committee that in the last election in Australia roughly 10 per cent of the people used the facilities of absentee voting. There were 4,619,517 electors. There were 4,142,814 votes cast in their own polls. There were 145,360 postal votes. There were 324,553 absentee votes, and 6,844 declaration votes.

Declaration votes are affidavits taken by the elector at the poll in the case where his name is not on the list. Generally speaking, in Australia in the last 25 years, eight to ten per cent used the absentee postal facilities for voting. You must remember that in Australia in at least four of the states the lists are used for federal and state purposes, and that since the provincial and federal officials do the work the costs are greatly reduced in that manner.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Is there the absentee voting system anywhere in which is used the system of registration as we have it in Canada?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: In a national election I think we are the only country which prepares a list in the manner we do. I do not know of any country in the world where a list is prepared after they issue the writ in the manner in which we do it. Most of the other countries in the commonwealth, Europe and the United States, have permanent registration. So there is, to my knowledge, no comparison to be made.

Mr. BELL (*Saint John-Albert*): Since 1935 has there been a great increase in the number of people who would be classed as absentee voters?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I think that is the main complaint at each election since I have been in office, since 1934.

Mr. BELL (*Saint John-Albert*): That there has been an increase?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: It has been the complaint after each election. I am not in a position to say whether or not it is increasing. I do know this is a problem at least since 1934. An extensive study was made of permanent registration and absentee voting by committees of the House of Commons from 1936 to 1939. I am not able, however, to give you any information as to whether or not this is increasing.

Mr. BELL (*Saint-John-Albert*): Have you any conclusions in addition to the statement you have read in the light of the present-day situation and in the light of the failure of 1935?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: The only comment I can make would be that I do not see any serious objection to our present system. I may be rather naive, or it may be thought I am sitting in an ivory tower when I make this statement; but I received only one complaint in two general elections, from candidates, to be tabled by the Speaker of the house.

In my dealing with general elections this system appears to be giving general satisfaction, except that it does not provide facilities for people to vote who necessarily have to be absent from home.

My only other comment is that the permanent list is not the answer, because it will create new problems. Moreover, it is a very expensive package. The degree of expense would depend on whether we could use letter carriers, rural mail carriers, municipal officials, and so on, and give them a supplementary payment, other than their salary, to do this particular work.

There are many methods of applying a permanent list; but if it is proceeded with as we do it now, and if we appoint enumerators, I would imagine that we would have to have a half-yearly revision. You must remember that the list of electors contains 10 million names, and we would have to make about 2½ million changes a year to that list.

The normal percentage of changes, for instance, in connection with family allowances—I saw their accounts—is 24 per cent of changes in addresses, and so on. I have not even explored the cost of keeping these changes up to date.

They certainly could not be centralized at a central office here. This whole procedure would have to be decentralized, and with 2½ million changes a year, this would involve a great amount of clerical work, unless it was possible to obtain I.B.M. machines to replace the clerks. But that is one factor alone.

A half-yearly revision would cost \$4 million a year if we were to use our present methods of obtaining enumerators. This is merely an estimate, but it is based largely on our present system, if we were to draw from the same pool for our election officers as we do now.

If we changed that principle and went to mail carriers, letter carriers, rural mail carriers, municipal officers, provincial officials, and so on, and if we supplemented their income to do this particular work—I think in Australia for every 100 notations, they are paid so much, but it is not comparable with what we pay our enumerators here.

The cost factor is a great one; and whether that extra cost to cure this particular problem that now exists would be warranted, I am not in a position to say.

Mr. CARTER: A lot of electors are disfranchised because there are no advance polls on whose lists they are, and because they are on the move,—let us say, from boat to boat, on the Canadian National boats. Although they can put into a port in the same electoral district, nevertheless they cannot vote there, because their names may not be on that particular polling list, but on a list farther up the coast. Could something be done to alleviate that situation?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: The absentee vote is the only method I know of to correct that, but it would have to have adequate safeguards.

Mr. CARTER: You said that if a person's name was not on the list at the poll, he could still vote if he could get two people to vouch for him.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Provided it could be proved that the person is ordinarily resident in that polling division; but how can they prove that when they are not ordinary residents?

Mr. CARTER: As long as he is in the same electoral district I do not see why he should be forced to vote at one particular polling place.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I think the agents of the candidates would be terribly busy checking that particular matter, when people are on the move all over the place. In fact, they might be moved around in trucks.

Mr. CARTER: Could that not be overcome by giving these people who cannot have an advance poll, such a thing as a certificate which they could produce at whatever poll they could get to within that district? Once he has voted it could either be taken away from him, or countersigned, so that he could not vote elsewhere?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: It could be done, but certificates could be rather simply reproduced. In fact they reproduce our ballot paper now. I imagine you could drive a truck-load of people around these districts and vote them all over the place.

Mr. CARTER: It is not a very good reflection on the honesty of the voters.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I am not speaking of voters in general; I am speaking only of the very small percentage of people who lend themselves to this sort of practice.

Mr. AIKEN: Mr. Carter has not read Mr. Bell's return showing the number of convictions in 1957-58.

Mr. CARTER: Simply because an evil may exist, I do not see why we should deprive these people.

Mr. NIELSEN: Before I ask my question, might I make a suggestion in relation to Mr. Carter's recent observations, that it may be possible to design some form of rubber stamp which could be affixed on the presentation of this registration or certificate, as Mr. Carter suggested before. The stamp could be specially designed for the purpose of each election, or changed with each federal election. Perhaps some such system might be worked out, in the absence of a permanent list.

My question is twofold—but let me put it this way: the permanent list countries have had experience costwise in the administration of this type of system. I wonder if Mr. Castonguay has done any investigating along these lines in order to obtain comparable costs. If he has, is it the reason of Canada's geography that prevents us from instituting a permanent list system?

The second part of my question is this: if he has conducted this investigation and has come to the conclusion that a permanent list is not feasible in Canada, has he considered any other system which would allow absentee polling to be included with our present system, and if so, what?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: On the first part of your question, my comment on a rubber stamp or die-mark on the certificate would be that in large or sparsely settled electoral districts, where there is one returning officer, I would hate to see such authority to stamp these certificates passed around to a number of people, because there has to be control.

It would be simple in a constituency if the people could go to the returning officer and get the stamp. But in a large or sparsely settled electoral district it would be difficult to keep adequate control on the use of this check.

The only study I have made of the permanent list system is the one I made in the library of the parliament buildings. I did it through looking at Hansards and various statistics, as well as the information collected for this committee in 1936 which studied the particular problem of a permanent list.

In so far as costs are concerned, my observations are that all those countries make use of state officials, municipal officials, federal officials, and so on; they are used as election officers, and they are paid a supplementary allowance which is not by any means the same as paying an enumerator a full scale fee.

There is no question that when parliament wanted to use federal officers, such as letter carriers and rural mail carriers, it was feasible that a great saving would be effected in the half-yearly revision, and to supplement with election officers from another pool, where these postal facilities are not available. But I do not think we have passed any legislation here that would draw on the provincial and municipal people to cooperate with us.

In Australia, four of the states use the federal list for permanent purposes; therefore it is easy to obtain the cooperation of these officials without getting into any constitutional problem; and the same with the municipal set-up. I feel here that we would be limited only to our federal employees. The cost could be reduced a great deal there, but it would still be more expensive than the present system; however, not to the extent of \$4 million or \$5 million a year.

Mr. NIELSEN: Have you considered any other system of absentee voting in the absence of the possibility of a permanent list?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: The only system I know of, which is in existence which has adopted absentee voting is under the provincial Elections Act in Saskatchewan.

Mr. HARDIE: And B.C.?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: No, they have a permanent list there. Under the Saskatchewan provisions all you are required to take at a poll is an affidavit. I do not know whether that would be acceptable in certain electoral districts here. It is difficult to make a study of every place, because we are the only country in the world that prepares lists, after they issue the writ, and all absentee voting methods are tied or linked to a permanent list. All of them, without fail, make it so that at least on the date of the issuance of the writ no name can be added or taken off the list. A lot have a half-yearly revision. We will say it begins in April and ends in April. There is no way of getting on the list until the next half-yearly revision begins on October 1, and there is a mechanical set-up to provide a list. In England they start preparing the list on April 1, and they go through the processing, revision and checking of the list up until October 1. That list becomes effective for all elections ordered from October 1 until the end of March. Then that process is repeated again on October 1, when they start the process of revising the list so it will be effective for all elections called in the period from April 1 to October 1.

Mr. NIELSEN: You have also made some sort of estimate as to the cost of a permanent list. Inaccurate as it might be, could you give us the same type of estimate in connection with the cost of a permanent list system in Canada as compared with our present system? The last election cost was in the neighbourhood of \$8 million. If we had a permanent list and had to maintain it for four years, what would the cost be?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I cannot see it being done for less than \$4 million a year, and it would take approximately \$3 million a year to take the vote.

Mr. NIELSEN: That would be \$15 million as compared with roughly, \$8 million.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: The initial cost of setting up a permanent list, including the obtaining of signatures from each elector, would run \$6 million or \$7 million. That is the amount it would cost to establish your foundation. I am not including this amount in the cost. Once it has been set up it would require about \$4 million a year to maintain the list. However, that is merely an estimate.

Mr. HOWARD: Could you give us the costs in connection with the preparation of the original voters' list in British Columbia? This is a permanent list and you sign a card and so on.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I have not the costs in connection with that.

Mr. HOWARD: They do not have in British Columbia half-yearly or regular revisions of the list, except when the writ is issued; and then there is an enumeration that follows a somewhat similar pattern as our federal list. Then there is the closing of the list—I forget the time involved. But after it is issued a group of enumerators can be appointed, and are, who prepare additions to the list which applies to that constituency or polling division.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I believe the lieutenant governor in council has the power to order an enumeration when he believes the list of that district is inadequate.

Mr. HOWARD: He can cancel the list that has been made either in the constituency or the polling division, depending on the circumstances, and revise it.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Yes.

Mr. HOWARD: Or he can establish a new list.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Yes.

Mr. HOWARD: That happened in Delta. Because of the institution of street and street numbers instead of rural route, they cancelled the whole list and had a completely new enumeration in that district. I wonder whether it would be possible to communicate with the chief electoral officer out there to ascertain what their costs are for revision of the list after the writ is issued.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I think the thought expressed at the last meeting was not only for absentee voting, but to curtail the period of the election; and if the thought to curtail it to 30 or 36 days does exist, or is desirable, I cannot see how you can have a revision of the list after they issue the writ, or 30 days before polling day.

Mr. HOWARD: This revision presently exists in British Columbia. They are putting people on the list after the writ has been issued. I think their elections can be called within 38 days. It can be a longer period, but that is the minimum. They have a very difficult job in printing the list and getting them ready for election day; sometimes they just make it.

Mr. ORMISTON: I am wondering what percentage of the eligible voters are deprived of their franchise under the present facilities.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: There is no accurate way of estimating that. The only figure I gave the committee was in relation to the Commonwealth of Australia, where they have postal ballots. I do not know whether their circumstances, such as geographical location and so on have any bearing, but they have one district which is 700,000 square miles in area. This district would compare with the Mackenzie district. However, there roughly from 8 to 10 per cent of the people use these facilities. I am not going to imply that would be the percentage here. I do not know what the percentage would be.

Mr. HOWARD: Do you know what the percentage is in Saskatchewan and British Columbia?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I have some British Columbia figures. The figures in connection with the 1954 election are the last ones I have. The total votes cast were 817,397; the number of absentee votes cast was 33,194, and there were 11,288 rejected absentee votes.

Mr. HOWARD: That is for British Columbia?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Yes.

Mr. HOWARD: That is for 1954?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: No, 1956. The next one is 1953. The total votes cast at that time were 727,839. There were 35,447 absentee votes cast and 6,926 rejected.

Mr. HOWARD: There is some reason for that 1953 figure.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: You mean the 1956 figure concerning the 11,000?

Mr. HOWARD: No, the 1953 one. There may be some reason attached there for the higher percentage of rejected ballots. There was a higher percentage as well rejected in the ordinary ballots that were cast. That was because there was a change in the system.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I believe the figure for the ordinary vote run around 2 per cent over a period of time in British Columbia with the Alternative vote, but they only used it for about two elections.

Mr. HOWARD: A great percentage of rejected ballots there are those from people who get themselves in the wrong constituency.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Yes.

Mr. HOWARD: They think they are in Vancouver South whereas they might be in some other riding bordering it and the ballot goes to the wrong electoral district.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: No, Mr. Howard, I have not any figures in connection with the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): Could some system be devised for our civil servants abroad? This is a class of people who would be very easy to handle. I think this matter was brought up before. I would be pleased if you would comment on that and advise the committee as to the objections in that case.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Well, this question was studied by the 1955 committee and, as I recall it, it was defeated by one vote; so mechanically it is feasible and practical at very little expense. When I say "very little expense", it is just a matter of extra forms. But the committee then voted this suggestion down.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Simply a matter of following the procedure of the Canadian forces voting regulations?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Yes; but I think there was another principle involved, as I recall the meeting. But I may be treading on dangerous ground. It would appear to me that the committee made representations that they thought provincial employees would get into large industrial corporations who have employees who necessarily have to be absent, serving in other countries. Therefore, on the broad principles—I cannot speak for what motivated the members in putting it down, but that was part of the discussion—they would be getting into a large field and maybe the whole picture of permanent list, absentee voting and the whole set-up should be considered before they started considering special legislation for civil servants.

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): I remember now; it was because there were other groups who would not be so well favoured.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): There is another aspect of this, which I think could very easily be taken care of. That is in respect of wives, particularly, or others who have been abroad for perhaps two or three years in diplomatic

fields or the armed forces, and then return to Canada. They are caught by the rule of not being ordinarily resident for 12 months preceding polling day at such election. I, personally, have expressed my disagreement to the chief electoral officer with regard to the interpretation which is given to the act.

I think it could very well be argued that the wife of a serviceman who is abroad retains her place of ordinary residence in Canada. However, the fact is that it has been ruled that she does not, in many cases. This was the principal grievance concerning the Canada Elections Act in my riding at the last election. Wives would be back 10 or 11 months in Canada, after a period overseas, and they were refused the ballot.

It seems to me we could very simply cure that by a very simple amendment to section 14 of the act, and that we ought to do so. It is the most discriminatory thing, to prevent these wives, who have had to be overseas with their husbands, from having a ballot after they have been back in Canada for that length of time. If they were back in Canada one day, I say they ought to have a ballot; but one can imagine, when they have been back 11 months, the howl that goes up.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: That situation was aggrieved by a transfer to a brigade between the 1957 and 1958 election, and there were many, many complaints on that score.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): I had hundreds of them.

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): That is the problem: the same thing applies to wives who have gone abroad, whose husbands have been working for big corporations for so many years, and who have come back. Their husbands are not in the armed forces, but are civil servants.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Yes, it applies generally. The only person who is not concerned with this is the serviceman, because he can have his vote under the active service regulations. But it does apply to a civil servant abroad.

If the High Commissioner of Canada, in London, were to return here, he would be deprived of a vote for 12 months after coming back to Canada.

Mr. BELL (*Saint John-Albert*): We cannot make an exception for the high commissioner, can we?

Mr. WEBSTER: In this case, yes.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): I venture to suggest that perhaps the chief electoral officer should submit suggested drafts of an amendment which would take care of that situation. I know he, personally, is sympathetic, although he has a differing view of what the act presently provides than I confess I have.

Mr. NIELSEN: Mr. Chairman, Mr. McGee, of course, is not a member of this committee; but we have been discussing a question here which he would like me to put. I would much prefer that he put it himself, if it is agreeable to the other members of the committee.

Agreed.

Mr. MCGEE: Thank you very much, gentlemen. This concerns the spoiled ballots, and in particular, spoiled ballots by the use of some implement other than the pencil provided in the balloting booth to mark the ballot. I am wondering how widespread this is. Do you have any estimate of the number of ballots spoiled on any specific count?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I have that information, but I have not it here. I know—speaking from memory—the largest percentage of rejected ballots are spoiled because electors vote for more than one candidate. That seems unbelievable; but they vote for more than one candidate.

I am not speaking of voting in the federal districts of Halifax or Queens, where that is permissible; but in centres such as Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg

and Vancouver—where “municipal” seems to creep into the federal field—they think they are electing two councillors, or aldermen. That is the largest percentage: it runs to about 20 per cent of the ballots being spoiled because of that reason.

I think, with regard to the ink—the blue or red pencil, or whatever you have—the average runs below 10 per cent. There is the tick mark that comes in quite a lot; that runs about 4 or 5 per cent. But the largest percentage, definitely, is from the group of electors who wish to vote for more than one candidate on a single ballot.

Mr. McGEE: And the total percentage of spoiled ballots is, approximately?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I think it runs slightly over 1 per cent.

Mr. McGEE: Mr. Castonguay, this is my last question. Do you think it would serve any useful purpose, perhaps, in the next election, to call in all the spoiled ballots, examine them and perhaps make some recommendations to some future committee, with a view to changing the regulations concerning what is, and what is not, a spoiled ballot?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I personally examined all the rejected ballots of the 1953 election.

Mr. McGEE: They do come to you for examination?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Yes, I keep the supply for a year; and before I disposed of them, after the year expired, in 1953, I personally looked at all the rejected ballots; that is, over 60,000.

The only recommendation—it is not a “recommendation” I am making, but all I am saying is there is no legislation can sure an elector voting for more than one candidate.

The two things that may be cured is to accept a book-mark or ballot paper-mark by something such as a black or red pencil. But I am not recommending this, because this allows room for identification of the elector later on, when the ballots are counted. There are certain combinations can be worked out. You can give a fellow a green pencil and say, “You vote this way, or you are down the river”. And that night the agent looks for the green cross, and if it is not there, then certain intimidation follows.

There are certain factors which can influence an elector, such as even guaranteeing an investment. If you give a fellow a purple pencil and say that he does not get his investment until that purple pencil mark appears as a cross on the ballot paper that night—that is another example.

You could not do it for everybody, but there are enough colours of the rainbow in pencils to identify a substantial number of electors at the poll, if you want to work that combination.

I think that is the reason why members in the past have always resisted changing the method of marking the ballot paper, for fear of intimidating or influencing electors in their vote.

I personally do not think the percentage of rejected ballots compared to the total number—that is the marks other than black pencil—amount to more than 10 per cent of 60,000.

I can assure the members of the committee they cannot be cured by legislation. Some of them put very frivolous remarks on the ballot, and some of them are not too flattering. As I say, I do not think you can cure that by legislation.

The CHAIRMAN: Have we any other questions on this item?

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): I was wondering if we could leave this question of absentee voting, and get to grips with it at a later time?

I wonder if Mr. Castonguay could prepare for us an amendment to section 14, which would deal with this question of wives of civil servants back in Canada who are not back in Canada for more than one year.

Secondly, I was wondering whether he could outline in a memorandum the procedure which would meet Mr. Richard's point on civil servants.

And then, thirdly, whether he would indicate to us whether by a system of transfer ballots, or in any way other than that, there is any practical means that he sees under which we could have some extension of the system of absentee voting.

I think we have to come to grips with this in some fashion, and I personally am searching to see how we can come to some decisions.

Mr. AIKEN: On the same subject, could I ask another question?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Aiken?

Mr. AIKEN: What period of time before the election would an absentee voter be in his polling subdivision? Are most of these people away for a period of months, or would it be possible to use the list enumerated for that particular election in any way?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: It goes back to whether parliament wants safeguards, in their electoral legislation on absentee voting.

The minister accepts the principle of the affidavit of a person going to the poll and saying, "I have to be away from home, and I live in Vancouver South. I want my vote to be applied to Vancouver South". That is simple, but you would not have safeguards. One is that the person is qualified to vote in Vancouver South; and, secondly, there is no comparison of a signature on the original application for enrolment against the one that appears in the postal ballot.

Mr. AIKEN: What I am envisaging is something along these lines, that the voter, after the enumeration had been completed, could go to the D.R.O. in his own proper polling station and obtain from him a certification which he could use anywhere. Then, at that time, his name would be removed or checked off the list so he could not vote again. I wonder whether that would be useful to absentee voters, or whether they are away for a month before the election actually takes place?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: In the first place, I think, generally speaking, electoral officers do a reasonably good job and are basically honest; but I think it would be pretty difficult to keep at that 45,000 if the D.R.O. issued certificates permitting people to vote. I think that should be controlled by the returning officers. You will get this problem, that deputy returning officers can only be granted after enumeration day. It has been my experience that deputy returning officers sometimes are appointed on the Sunday before polling day. So, from an administrative point of view, I think it would collapse, that suggestion, unless you had permanent officials all year round.

Mr. AIKEN: The time limit would also work against it?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Yes, the time limit would also work against it. That certification might also enable you to vote in Halifax. But to get the Halifax vote you have also to have the names of the candidates running in your constituency. You also have to have some facility in a large area in order to know what electoral district you will be in, and so on. The province of British Columbia allows a period of three weeks for postal ballots to come in before you can have an official count. That is to permit all of the boxes to come in to the returning officer.

If absentee voting were permitted from one coast to another and we had, at many electoral districts, the official addition of the votes three weeks after, a second look would have to be taken at the official addition of the votes;

because if you want all these postal ballots to arrive on time you would have to have a period of two months. We have some ballot boxes which do not come in until 30 days after polling day. So I think if you do not want to have too long a period after polling day until the official addition day, you would have to allow absentee voting only in adjacent provinces and not from Newfoundland to British Columbia. You could have it that way, but there would be a long period after polling day before you would be able to have an official count, and that might not be desirable on some occasions when it is the wish to have parliament called in a hurry.

Mr. AIKEN: Do you agree with Mr. Bell that absentee voting is well nigh impossible without a permanent list?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: It is possible, but you would not have the same safeguards. Everything is possible. You can adapt absentee voting to any system if you are willing to sacrifice some of the safeguards. I do not know whether or not the members of this committee would be prepared to sacrifice those safeguards. One is the checking of the signature of the elector against the signature on the envelope. You need a signature to compare.

I know of no other system. I have made a long study of it and have tried to adapt absentee voting to our present system. There may be more impetuous minds than mine, but certainly I cannot find any method of adapting absentee voting to our system and still retain adequate safeguards.

I can design right here a system, if you are prepared to accept affidavits, like Saskatchewan does. I am not saying it does not work in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan, as you know, is pretty well a rural province with only one or two large cities or towns. It is easy to design an act to a province. I am not, however, too sure that it is a good thing in some centres, which I will not mention.

Mr. KUCHEREPA: I know this question of absentee voting is a problem. I would like to ask this question. In the case of the armed forces, the party affiliation of the candidate is placed on the ballots?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Not on the ballot. We publish a list of the candidates.

Mr. KUCHEREPA: But they have it available?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Yes.

Mr. KUCHEREPA: What I have in mind may be a novel idea. Having in mind the figures given in respect of Australia, where it would appear that possibly 5 to 10 per cent of the population might be affected, and having in mind a federal election and the number of people entitled to vote, perhaps a constituency at large could be created. Every person would have an opportunity of casting the vote, which could be checked back against the original list made, or on the basis of an affidavit. The whole matter would only affect one constituency instead of 265 and probably prevent the elimination of the safeguards to which Mr. Castonguay has been referring. It would create a constituency of about 45,000 to 90,000 persons, which is an average constituency.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: This is a novel suggestion. The way the other countries solve this problem is in this manner. With the permanent lists, if you are leaving the country, you would apply to the registrar and say you are leaving and that you wish to appear on the absentee voters' lists. You are struck off the permanent list and when an election is ordered you write to the registrar and ask him for a postal ballot. He sends you a postal ballot.

Mr. KUCHEREPA: In this case you would be on the absentee list.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: It could be done.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Dr. Kucherepa's suggestion is along the line adopted in some provinces during and immediately after the war in electing service representatives at large. I think the province of Manitoba had three service representatives. The Minister of Trade and Commerce had his first entry into politics as a servicemen's representative in the legislature of Manitoba. It would be the same principle; instead of the servicemen's votes being distributed to all candidates, they would vote for certain ones.

Mr. HOWARD: I am not wishing to cut off this particular discussion. However, Mr. Bell made two or three suggestions with respects to wives of armed services personnel, and civil servants in respect of absentee voting.

In order that we might have at some future time something concrete before us, I wonder if this necessitates a formal decision or whether or not anything could be done through request?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I would be glad to prepare an amendment respecting any person who would be qualified to have these limitations restricted to one year's residence.

I would like to have some direction on that. What resident qualifications would you want? In your urban list, the list is closed about 16 days before polling day. Would you tie down their return to a certain date before the issue of the writ, or in respect to what prior residence they had in the constituency?

All electors now must meet the basic requirement, as being ordinarily resident in the electoral district on the date that the writ is issued. Now, if you prolong this date into the period of the election, you are creating another class of people who have special privilege.

I could prepare an amendment whereby they meet only the basic requirement, if you think it desirable.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Offhand my view would be that the date the writ was issued ought to be the test.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I could prepare an amendment along those lines.

Mr. Bell asked for a study of the permanent list and absentee voting and for a memorandum on that basis at the last meeting. I believe we have it, and it is easily procured, but there is no information on it which would be of any assistance to the committee. It merely sets up the procedure. It would require an on-the-spot study. Then you can go in with some facts and authoritative information about it. The United States used a permanent list, as well as the United Kingdom and Australia.

I believe, if the committee wants authoritative and detailed information, it would not be a matter of cost; it would be whether it could be applied to this country. It would be very simple to prepare a memorandum on that basis, but to prepare such a memorandum on the basis of information in the library of the House of Commons I do not think would supply you with too much with respect to applying the details, and the mechanical side of the list.

Sometimes I have written for costs and they have said: we use state officials and so on, but you cannot really get at the real cost, because the officials who are employed would receive an annual salary anyway. I think an on-the-spot study of the systems, which have been used in Australia for 40 years, and in the United Kingdom and in many of the states of the United States of America, having to do with permanent lists, should be made. I do not see how a comprehensive report could be prepared unless it was made on the spot.

I would be glad to prepare a report based on the information in the library of the House of Commons. That is very easily done. But I do not see how you could get any more information from it than I have already given to you.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): What I had in mind in the third suggestion was your giving an indication to us of the extent to which the absentee vote might be grafted upon our present system of enumeration.

I had fairly detailed experience in 1935 with the permanent list, and I was not enamoured with it; and having an estimate of the cost which Mr. Castonguay has referred to this morning, I am less enamoured. But it does seem to me that it should be possible to graft a moderate degree of absentee voting on the existing system, and I would like to see Mr. Castonguay prepare a memorandum on the subject to show us how it could be done. Whether we wish to go to the extent or whether we are prepared to lower the safeguards, and whether we would be prepared to accept a simple affidavit.

As I am presently advised I would not be prepared to accept it in most constituencies in Canada. There are some places where I know the "goon squads" would get started, and we would have real trouble. There is bad enough trouble in those constituencies now.

Mr. WEBSTER: Speak for yourself, Mr. Bell.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): Do not identify your area.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I pointed out at the last meeting that I do not have sufficient information on the actual operation of permanent lists to prepare a memorandum. I would have to know more about it with respect to the mechanical side.

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): I think we have to make the decision. If we accept Mr. Castonguay's explanation, maybe we could bring in somebody from Australia, the United States or the United Kingdom to explain it to us, or we could send competent officials to one of these countries to find out about the system. Otherwise we may go on like this for a long time.

Mr. HOWARD: Could we not, if it were nothing more than a start, have a look at the system which operates in British Columbia? That is the present day system? That is an absentee system. It has a permanent list. There is a signed card and there is a check against the poll book. There are all these safeguards that you have mentioned which exist and which you necessarily need to prevent any sculduggery taking place. The only thing that does not exist in British Columbia is the half-yearly or regular revision of the list. I wonder, as a start, if we could have an analysis of the system that exists in British Columbia; it seems to work fairly well out there. The only difficulty is that there is not the regular revision of the list, but that takes place between the time the writ is issued and the closing of the list. Also, anyone can register any time except in that period when the lists are closed and election day. He can register then, but he cannot vote at that election, but he can for the next one.

The CHAIRMAN: At this time, gentlemen, we are due to depart from this room to allow the next committee to get under way. You heard Mr. Castonguay express his views on the limitations which are upon him in reference to the exhaustive sort of study which Mr. Bell has requested. Is it your wish that he might proceed to explain a little further, if he can with his present facilities, at a subsequent meeting?

Mr. KUCHEREPA: Would Mr. Castonguay consider giving some thought to my suggestion by looking into the matter of what success we had in the case of Manitoba where we had a similar—

Mr. CASTONGUAY: You mean Alberta.

Mr. KUCHEREPA: Yes, I am sorry, Alberta, where we had a similar conception, and see if we cannot evolve something along that line.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps we should hear from Mr. Castonguay further at the next meeting. At that time we can explore it in greater detail because if an on-the-spot survey of these things is envisaged, we cannot make any definite conclusions on it at this time.

APPENDIX I

(Contents referred to on May 12 and May 22)

SEE ISSUE NO. 1 PAGE 7

SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THE CANADA ELECTIONS ACT
(Prepared and submitted by the Chief Electoral Officer)

Name and Address	Date	Addressed to	Amendment suggested
1. P. E. CHARLEBOIS	—	Secretary of State	Improvement in polling facilities.
2. F. W. WHITEHOUSE, President, Civil Service Federation of Canada	18/2/57	Secretary of State	Voting by Civil Servants employed Overseas.
3. MARC BOYER, Deputy Minister, Dept. Mines and Technical Surveys	6/6/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Voting by Civil Servants employed in the field at date of an election.
4. GARTH McDOWELL, Director, Memorial Unit, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Sask.	6/6/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Absentee Voting.
5. ALBERT ENGELHARDT, 518-4th Ave. S.W., Calgary, Alta.	10/6/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Absentee Voting—Student going to job after Writs issue.
6. MRS. CLARE DERKSON, Clinton, Ont.	12/6/57	Prime Minister	Wife of serviceman moving with husband to new station.
7. N. D. LANE, Secretary, Canadian Association of University Teachers, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ont.	31/9/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Disfranchisement of University Teachers attending meetings of learned societies.
8. P. K. MacDOWALL, Federal Electric Corp., Dorval, P.Q.	11/11/58	Minister of National Revenue	Enquiring when men on "Dew Line" will be permitted to vote.

9. ARTHUR TURNER, M.L.A., Vancouver, B.C.	15/4/53	Chief Electoral Officer	a) Absentee Voting. b) Extending hours of polling. c) Permanent election organization (federal-provincial). d) Permanent voters list. e) Registration of voters. f) Voting cards to be issued. g) Use of High School teachers and students, etc., as D.R.O.'s and poll clerks.
10. MRS. H. A. WALKER, C.N.R. Station, Shellbrook, Sask.	12/4/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Absentee Voting.
11. G. I. MacINNIS, 2572 Birch St., Apt. 206, Vancouver, B.C.	24/4/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Absentee Voting.
12. HARRY HAMP, 1010 University Drive, Saskatoon, Sask.	11/5/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Absentee Voting.
13. J. J. MAIN, Grand Secretary, Grand Lodge of British Columbia, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, No. 1-35, Broadway, Vancouver, B.C.	28/6/57	Prime Minister	Absentee Voting.
14. H. WERNER, 428 Anderson Ave., Winnipeg 4, Man.	21/10/57	Chief Electoral Officer	a) Absentee Voting. b) Form of ballot paper.
*15. EDMUND BOYER, Sec.-Treas., Ontario Provincial Council, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, 33 King St. E., Kitchener, Ont.	12/8/58	Prime Minister	a) Absentee Voting. b) Extension of privilege of voting at Advance Polls.
*16. REV. JOHN SHEPHERD, 4501-20th St., Vernon, B.C.	23/6/53	Minister of Justice	Absentee Voting.
17. MRS. E. J. MCCERRY, Hon. Corresponding Sec., The National Council of Women, 360 Elgin St., Ottawa, Ont.	26/9/53	Secretary of State	Absentee Voting.

STANDING COMMITTEE

SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THE CANADA ELECTIONS ACT—*Concluded*

Name and Address	Date	Addressed to	Amendment suggested
18. M. J. C. McMULLEN, Manager, Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, Winnipeg, Man.	6/11/57	Secretary of State	Single Alternative Vote.
19. A. O. OISEN, Ford Hotel, Toronto, Ont.	9/4/58	His Excl. the Gov. General	Registration of Voters.
20. A. O. OISEN, Ford Hotel, Toronto, Ont.	3/5/58	Chief Electoral Officer	Registration of Voters.
21. Mrs. W. J. ANDRIESHYN, Apt. 7—3802 W. 4th Ave., Vancouver 8, B.C.	31/3/58	Chief Electoral Officer	Wife of serviceman stationed in Europe not in Canada one year before issue of Writ—could not vote.
*22. Mrs. CLARE W. DERKSON, R.C.A.F. Station, Moose Jaw, Sask.	18/2/58	Secretary of State	Repeal of residence requirements for wives of servicemen returning from overseas service.
23. G. C. SEAMAUS, 1718—12th Ave. N.W., Calgary, Alta.	22/8/58	Secretary of State	Canadian citizen residing outside of Canada returned but not within a year before Writ issued—not allowed to vote.
24. CHARLAND PRUD'HOMME, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.	28/3/58	Secretary of State	Lowering of voting age.
*25. BERNARD J. LANIGAN, 161 7th St., Box 574, The Pas, Manitoba.	5/5/59	Prime Minister	Age of voters to be reduced to 18.
*26. ROBERT ARMOUR, Coal Harbour, B.C.	21/3/58	Secretary to Prime Minister	Seasonal workers—waiving of residence qualifications to permit their inclusion in voters list.
27. S. K. A. KAYS, Foam Lake, Sask.	17/6/57	Prime Minister	a) Discrimination against Indians and non-Canadian citizens b) Do away with voters lists and issue voters certificate.

28. JOSEPH LAPRESTE, Box 24, Station F, Toronto, Ont.	13/2/58	Chief Electoral Officer	Enumeration—Rooming House Operator should be obliged to furnish names of roomers to enumerators.
29. E. CHARLEBOIS, 202 Laurier Ave. W., Ottawa, Ont.	27/1/58	Public Relations	Card or Book with photo and all particulars should be furnished. Should include a blank space to be stamped when person votes.
*30. STANLEY R. M. FRYER, 270 Winchester St., Winnipeg, Man.	29/1/58	Secretary of State	Enumeration—Voters to attend at offices of responsible officials (such as RCMP, Postmasters, Dep. Returning Officers); voters list to be posted in those offices only.
31. A. WALKER, 4396 Windsor St., Vancouver 10, B.C.	5/8/58	Chief Electoral Officer	a) should be 14 days between issue of Writ and commencement of enumeration. b) alternate way of publishing Notice of revision. c) Advance Poll should close not later than 9 P.M.
32. MRS. MARGARET ROSSELL, Secretary, Simonds Ladies P.C. Association, Saint John, N.B.	8/2/58	Chief Electoral Officer	More competent persons to be appointed as enumerators.
*33. W. M. PICK, R. R. 1, Aldergrove, B.C.	1/4/58	Prime Minister	Candidates for public office be required to produce credentials, namely birth certificates and citizenship papers.
*34. L. J. WALSH, 66 West 12th Ave., Vancouver, B.C.	21/5/58	Prime Minister	Candidates' posters not to be allowed in polls on election day.
*35. Miss JESSIE PENTZ, 105½ Charles St., Halifax, N.S.	30/4/58	Prime Minister R. I. McLeave, M.P. Edmund Morris, M.P.	Physically incapacitated to be allowed to cast votes in their homes.
*36. Mrs. ELLEN STEWART, 3447 Shuter St., Apt. 2, Montreal, P.Q.	Undated (Rec. 27/2/58)	Prime Minister	Facilities for shut-ins to cast their ballots.
*37. Mrs. IRVINE WAGG, P.O. Box 13, Collingwood, Ont.	12/6/57	Prime Minister	a) Improved conditions at polling stations. b) Voting in hospitals.
38. OTTO NORDING, Regina Hotel, Whitehorse, Y.T.	27/11/57	Chief Electoral Officer	a) Soldiers deprived of vote at by-election. b) Election expenses. c) Tampering with Indians. d) Permanent election officials. e) Use of Transfer or Identity card.
39. Miss MAE BURNISS, Gelert, Ont.	24/2/58	Chief Electoral Officer	Placing of ballot in ballot box by elector.

SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THE CANADA ELECTIONS ACT—Continued

Name and Address	Date	Addressed to	Amendment suggested
40. MRS. B. L. JAMESON, Apt. 10A—157 King St. W., Toronto, Ont.	17/2/53	Prime Minister	Voting by persons in hospital.
41. NORMAN PATRICK WALTON, 206 Ashdale Avenue, Toronto, Ont.	11/6/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Voting by proxy by bed-ridden patients.
42. EDITH E. SARGENT, Eyre, Sask.	29/4/57	Chief Electoral Officer.	Rural Notices of Revision to be posted up in Post Offices.
43. H. McLEOD, 470 Lochside Dr., R.R. No. 2, Sidney, B.C.	14/7/53	Chief Electoral Officer	a) Lists of electors to be posted up in Post Offices. b) Party affiliations of candidates to be shown on ballot papers.
44. JOHN GIBSON, 1274 Barclay St., Vancouver, B.C.	17/6/57	Prime Minister	Party affiliations of candidates to be shown on ballot papers.
*45. MRS. M. COURTNEY, Celtic, Box 166, Perdue, Sask.	1/3/53	Prime Minister	Party affiliations of candidates to be shown on ballot papers.
*46. OLAF THEO. SATHER, Box 22, "Echo Farm", Loreburn, Sask.	10/3/53	Prime Minister	Party affiliations of candidates to be shown on ballot papers.
47. J. O. BEAUCHEMIN, 101, rue St-Jean-Baptiste, St-Guillaume d'Upton, Comté de Yamaska, Que.	6/8/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Method of Voting—ballot box and form of ballot paper.
*48. RAOUL BRAZEAU, 4693, rue Chabot, Montreal, P.Q.	25/2/53	Prime Minister	Form of ballot and method of marking. White circle on black background—to facilitate counting of votes where pencil marking of ballot is faint.
49. JEROME CHOQUETTE, 261 St. James St. W., Montreal, Que.	22/5/53	Chief Electoral Officer	Amending Section concerning offences in connection with ballots and ballot boxes.

50. L. J. WALSH, 66 West 12th Ave., Vancouver, B.C.	March '58	Chief Electoral Officer	Method of voting—use of voting machines.
51. J. A. PERRY, Manager, Perry Brick & Tile Co. Ltd., Redcliff, Alta.	14/3/58	Chief Electoral Officer	Time off for employees to vote.
*52. PIONEER GOLD MINES OF B.C. LIMITED	2/4/58	Minister of Justice	Curtailment of time permitted for voting where less than three hours required, such as in lumber camps. (To avoid loss of production; unnecessary expense involved in payment of wages.)
53. THE CANADIAN LEGION	July '58	Secretary of State	Advance Polls.
54. L. AUSTIN WRIGHT, Gen. Secretary, The Engineering Institute of Canada, 2050 Mansfield St., Montreal, P.Q.	June '57	Prime Minister	Extension of privilege of voting at Advance Polls.
55. P. J. ROWAN, Motor Vehicle Branch, Dept. of Highways, Govt. of Alberta, Edmonton, Alta.	17/6/57	Prime Minister	Extension of privilege of voting at Advance Polls.
56. CAROL SIGHT, 460 Roslyn Blvd., Dollarton, B.C.	17/6/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Extension of privilege of voting at Advance Polls.
57. SCOTT F. D. TAYLOR, Provincial Director, State Farm Agency (Ontario) Ltd., 31 Yonge St., Toronto, Ont.	18/6/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Extension of privilege of voting at Advance Polls.
58. GARNET C. BEST, 126 Baltimore Rd., Winnipeg, Man.	25/6/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Extension of privilege of voting at Advance Polls.
59. ELIZABETH H. MORTON, Exec. Secretary, Canadian Library Associations, 46 Elgin St., Ottawa, Ont.	29/7/57	Secretary of State	Extension of privilege of voting at Advance Polls.

SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THE CANADA ELECTIONS ACT—Continued

Name and Address	Date	Addressed to	Amendment suggested
60. M. J. G. McMULLEN, Manager, Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, Winnipeg, Man.	Nov. '57	Secretary of State	Extension of privilege of voting at Advance Polls.
*61. CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Montreal, P.Q.	3/1/58	Secretary of State	Extension of advance polls. Extension of hours of polling to 8.00 P.M.
*62. CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Montreal, P.Q.	23/4/59	Secretary of State	(1) Provision for the greatly extended use of advance polls in federal elections. (2) That federal polling hours be extended to 8.00 P.M.
63. CANADIAN FEDERATION OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S CLUBS	—	Secretary of State	Extension of privilege of voting at Advance Polls.
64. Assoc. Chief Justice W.B. Scott, Superior Court, Montreal, P.Q.	27/8/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Deposit on application for recount should be increased.
65. L. WHITE, Apt. 22, 394 Dovercourt Rd., Toronto, Ont.	9/7/58	Chief Electoral Officer	Publication of summary of candidates' election expenses. Form should be re-designed and candidate should have choice of medium.
*66. G. KENNETH ISLEY, Berwick, N.S.	4/3/59	Prime Minister	Ceiling of \$2,500 on candidates' election expenses (as in U.K.).
67. R. B. HURTON, 56 Sparks St., Ottawa, Ont.	19/3/58	Chief Electoral Officer	Forms 19 and 112 (used by revising officers) should be changed so as to do away with necessity of typing on both sides.
68. F. T. McDERMOTT, Chairman, Election Law Committee, Ont. Liberal Association, 302 Bay St., Toronto, Ont.	10/2/58	Chief Electoral Officer	Form 37 (Directions to electors) use of certain name appearing thereon.
69. GEORGE K. HAYESSTOCK, Returning Officer for Acadia, Castor, Alta. * Filed by Secretary of State	13/12/57	Chief Electoral Officer	Acadia should be included in Schedule Four.

APPENDIX II

(Reply to a question by Mr. R. A. Bell, with regard to election offences.)

GENERAL ELECTIONS—1957 and 1958

ST. PAUL'S

- One person—6 charges of forging Form No. 18—Section 309 (1) (b), Criminal Code.
6 charges of uttering Form No. 18—Section 311, Criminal Code.
6 charges of personation—Section 17 (16), Canada Elections Act.
Sentence: one month and a fine of \$300 or an additional one month.
- One person—10 charges of forging Form No. 18—Section 309 (1) (b), Criminal Code.
10 charges of uttering Form No. 18—Section 311, Criminal Code.
12 charges of personation—Section 17 (16), Canada Elections Act.
Sentence: 6 months.
- One person—2 charges of forging Form No. 18—Section 309 (1) (b), Criminal Code.
2 charges of uttering Form No. 18—Section 311, Criminal Code.
Acquitted.
- One person—10 charges of forging Form No. 18—Section 309 (1) (b), Criminal Code.
10 charges of uttering Form No. 18—Section 311, Criminal Code.
2 charges of perjury—Section 112, Criminal Code.
Sentence: 6 months.
- One person—4 charges of forging Form No. 18—Section 309 (1) (b), Criminal Code.
4 charges of uttering Form No. 18—Section 311, Criminal Code.
Sentence: 3 months.

BEAUCE

- One person—1 charge—opening a ballot box—Section 29 (f), Canada Elections Act.
2 charges—taking ballot books from ballot box—Section 29 (f), Canada Elections Act.
24 charges—illegally supplying ballots—Section 29 (b), Canada Elections Act.
24 charges—unlawful possession of ballots—Section 29 (c), Canada Elections Act.
Sentence: One year without hard labour for each count (concurrent)—sentences to run concurrent with sentences imposed under sections 29 (c), 29 (f), 29 (b) of the Canada Elections Act.

One person—13 charges—unlawful possession of ballots—Section 29 (c), Canada Elections Act.

Sentence: One year for each count (concurrent).

One person—11 charges—unlawful possession of ballots—Section 29 (c), Canada Elections Act.

Pending.

LAURIER

One person—Illegal possession of ballots—Section 29 (c), Canada Elections Act.

Having caused to be deposited in ballot boxes, papers other than ballots prescribed by law—Section 29 (d), Canada Elections Act.

Attempted to cause to be deposited in ballot boxes, papers other than ballots prescribed by law—Section 29 (l), Canada Elections Act.

Acquitted.

LONGUEUIL

Three persons—2 charges—manipulation of ballots and ballot boxes—Section 29 (f), Canada Elections Act.

Sentence: 6 months each person.

One person—2 charges—manipulation of ballots and ballot boxes—Section 29 (f), Canada Elections Act.

Sentence: 1 month on each charge (concurrent).

ST. LAWRENCE-ST. GEORGE

Two persons—42 charges—charged while acting as enumerators—added fictitious names to list of electors—Section 17 (17), Canada Elections Act.

Sentence: first person 7 days; second person 3 days.

SAINTE-MARIE

Two persons—1 charge—forgery—adding names to poll book—Section 309, Criminal Code.

1 charge—illegally making use of forged documents—Section 311, Criminal Code.

1 charge—taking false oath—Section 114, Criminal Code.

Sentence: 3 months each person on each count (concurrent).

One person—charged with fraudulently having taken ballots—Section 29, Canada Elections Act.

Sentence: 3 months.

CARTIER

One person—13 charges—forgery—Section 309, Criminal Code.

13 charges—uttering—Section 311, Criminal Code.

5 charges—false statement in extra-judicial proceedings—Section 114, Criminal Code.

Sentence: 1 day on each charge for a total of 31 days to be served consecutively.

In addition, as a result of allegations having been made that offences had been committed in the electoral districts of Chambly-Rouville, Hull, Quebec South, Hochelaga, St. Ann, Saint-Jacques, Saint-Jean-Iberville, Napierville, Saint-Antoine-Westmount, Quebec East, and Maisonneuve-Rosemont, the R. C. M. P. were asked to conduct investigations into each case. In my opinion, the evidence adduced by the R. C. M. P. did not justify charges being laid in connection with any of such allegations.